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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET

SUBJECT: (Optional)

Monthly Report -- London Bureau

FROM:

Chief, Operations Group

EXTENSION

NO.

DATE

November 1988

STAT

TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)

DATE

RECEIVED

FORWARDED

OFFICER'S INITIALS

COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)

1.

C/MOD

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C/ESG

4.

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C/FED

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C/ADD

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C/HED

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C/Computer Operations

12.

13.

14.

FED Secretary

15.

5 December 1988
FBIS-4435-88

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service
THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group
FROM : Chief, London Bureau, FBIS
SUBJECT : Monthly Report -- London Bureau -- November 1988

I. GENERAL

1. BBC announced on 29 November the appointment of David Frost, Manager, Scenic Services Operations at BBC TV, as new deputy general manager of BBC Monitoring. Mr. Frost is expected to take up his new duties early in the New Year.
2. A threatened 1-day strike by the Caversham Chapel of the National Union of Journalists (NUJ) over the broadcast ban on interviews with members of listed groups in Northern Ireland was averted early in the month when agreement was reached at the national level. In another union development, BBC Monitoring management has registered a second "failure to agree" with local NUJ and BETA branches over automation issues and the talks will now move to the national level.
3. The bureau chief made a number of courtesy calls during the month including discussions with the ambassador, the deputy chief of mission, the minister counselor for administrative affairs and his deputy, the minister counselor for public affairs and the base commander at High Wycombe.
4. The budget outlook has become grimmer as the dollar dropped steadily during the month in the wake of the U.S. elections and the announcement of increased interest rates in the United Kingdom. By the end of the month, the dollar, standing at approximately \$1.85 to the pound, had lost almost 10 cents in value against the pound.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Editorial/Monitorial

1. It came as no surprise to a tired editorial and PMU staff that the November file was the highest file for any month in the history of the bureau. Ethnic unrest in the Balkan and Transcaucasus areas of the Soviet Union and in Yugoslavia, a very active Gorbachev, numerous events in East Europe and the annual GOSR celebrations contributed to the record wordage.
2. At the Wire's request, the bureau filed a number of initial reports from REUTER on the 3 November coup attempt in the

Maldives for a "key" Washington consumer who was experiencing a circuit outage. According to the Wire, the London REUTER service was far ahead of the Washington circuit.

3. The PMU weekend monitorial shift proved invaluable during the month when PMU was able to provide BBC and Headquarters consumers with a number of exclusive press reports on the Soviet ethnic unrest appearing in weekend papers. The BBC Newsroom and Part I have expressed special thanks for the expedited processing.
4. The chief editor has arranged for all new editorial arrivals to have a full-day "attachment" to the BBC as part of the final phase of the training program. BBC editors and monitors, in turn, have been receiving briefings from the chief editor about FBIS operations and requirements.
5. On 4 November Associate Editor [] and the chief editor met with BBC's radioteletype personnel to seek out ways to improve distribution of press agency materials to FBIS. The jointly-worked-out new procedures have greatly reduced the amount of time slot editors previously spent on sorting press agency copy. STAT
6. The bureau was disappointed to learn on 4 November that former BBC Chief Russian Monitor [] has accepted a permanent position at Bush House and will not be returning to BBC Monitoring at the conclusion of his rotational assignment. STAT

B. Coverage

1. The BBC arranged to take a number of extra newscasts from Riga, Tallinn, Vilnius and Scandinavian radios during the month for unique reportage on the Baltic unrest. In addition, there has been extensive coordination with Nicosia over coverage of Baku, Yerevan and Tbilisi Russian-language and Azeri casts.
2. Extra coverage of Algiers TV provided live relays of the Palestine National Council meeting as well as much useful material on the Algerian referendum and the formation of the new Algerian government.
3. The BBC, at the behest of FBIS, maintained a close watch on Montreal radio the night of 21-22 November to provide coverage of the Canadian general elections. The bureau filed a number of FYI's throughout the night giving updated election returns.
4. BBC engineers this month successfully modified BBC printers to receive the TASS cyrillic landline service at the upgraded 300-baud rate. This, along with the earlier upgraded English landline service, has resulted in far more

reliable receipt of TASS.

5. In France and Finland journalists strikes have spread to broadcasting. Helsinki Domestic and International Services carried only music on 30 November while news on Paris radio the same day was sharply curtailed to a few brief casts. Earlier in the month, the French postal strike had disrupted PMU receipt of certain subscription papers.

C. Lateral Services

1. At the request of the Embassy Political Section, the bureau refiled to NSC and the Department of State Europe Bureau British Prime Minister Thatcher's 14 November Guildhall speech delivered on the eve of her U.S. visit. Other special services for the Embassy included responding to a request from the Political Section for Algiers TV texts of addresses to the Palestine National Council by PLO leader 'Arafat and provision of a videotape of a documentary on Iraq carried on UK television.
2. The bureau used military express mail to meet a high-level Headquarters consumer request for a videotape of an ITV "Dispatches" feature on technology transfer.
3. The bureau has worked out procedures with the Embassy to provide relevant duty officers with telephone alerts about breaking developments of specific interest to the mission.

D. Communications

1. Procedures have been drawn up for use of the IDD system, with special emphasis on preventing non-FBIS access to the computer. Training will begin as soon as staffing and workload constraints permit.
2. The IBM position on the LCU computerized commo system has now been changed to a Victor PC, bringing it in line with the other LCU hardware.
3. Internet: Commo supervisor [] engineer [] and visiting Chief/MOD and Chief/FED attended the biannual Internet meeting at Madley. New fault reporting procedures discussed during the meeting have been incorporated into the Internet Manual.

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E. Technical

1. The bureau engineering and communications sections spent much of the week of 13 November in discussions with [] of ADD and GE and LEC contractors on phase two of the London Communications Upgrade (LCU), involving conversion from Autodin to [] for our primary communications circuit. Bureau engineer [] performed line selector tests as a followup to the visit

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and forwarded the results to Headquarters. The bureau is still awaiting responses from BBC Engineering on the impact of the commo upgrade on the BBC automated system.

2. The initial conversion of the AFP pressfax equipment for digital transmission has been carried out, but additional contractor work is required before successful transmissions can begin.
3. Bureau technicians have installed a new domestic TV monitoring position in the PMU area for use by part-time employee [] and selected PMU media analysts when required.

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III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

1. The bureau had many excuses during the month to pop champagne corks at special ceremonies to mark well-deserved promotions for Chief Editor [] to GS-14, Administrative Officer [] to GS-13, Associate Editor [] to FBN-9 and PMU media analyst [] to FBN-8. PMU senior media analyst [] was honored with a Quality Step Increase in recognition of her sustained outstanding performance and high productivity over the past year. Bureau drivers [] were also honored for another year of safe driving.
2. In addition to the above-mentioned personal awards, the entire bureau was honored at a wine and cheese party hosted by the bureau chief and presented with a Meritorious Unit Citation for reportage on Soviet developments over the past year.
3. In yet another ceremony, the bureau chief toasted and praised a number of bureau employees for long and faithful service to FBIS. Recipients of longevity pins and certificates included administrative assistant [] and Communications Unit chief [] (35 years); Tabulators chief [] (30 years); teletype supervisors [], associate editor [] and PMU media specialist [] (20 years); tape relay operator [] (15 years) and PMU senior media analysts [] and associate editor [] (10 years).
4. Tape relay operator [] retired on 30 November after 24 years service with FBIS. She was presented with a letter from Director/FBIS, the FBIS retirement plaque and a clock given by her colleagues at a special ceremony in the bureau chief's office. In another loss for the Communications Section tape relay operator [] resigned effective 19 November. A third

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loss will take place early in the New Year when operator [] transfers to the Tabulations Section to fill an upcoming vacancy. Three candidates have been placed in processing.

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5. Editor [] departed on 22 November for a PCS assignment in Headquarters. He and tape relay operator [] were married on 17 November.

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6. Part-time Lithuanian translator [] arrived in London on 15 November and will begin working in the Admin office at the Embassy on 5 December.

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7. PMU Arabic media analyst [] and his wife proudly announced the birth of a daughter, Sara, on 9 November.

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8. On the recruitment front, PMU has received 27 responses to its advertisement in the DAILY TELEGRAPH for a Russian translator to fill a vacant PMU position. Preliminary Russian tests have been sent to 18 potential candidates. The best of these will be brought to Caversham for additional testing and interviews.

B. Buildings and Grounds

1. Administrative assistant [] who has assumed responsibility for bureau decorations, scored a coup during the month when he arranged for BBC to carpet, free of charge, the hallway in the bureau extending from the bureau chief's area to the ladies room. In addition to eliminating a major eyesore, the new carpeting will make life far quieter for the Tabulators and administrative staff.
2. PMU underwent a facelift in mid-month when the first installment of badly needed new furniture procured from FY-88 year-end funds was delivered.

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IV. VISITORS

To the bureau: MOD Chief [] 4-9 November for biannual Internet meeting and discussions with bureau and BBC management; FED Chief [] 7-9 November for Internet meeting; ADD officer [] and GE and LEC contractors 13-19 November for London Commo Upgrade discussions; [] and his deputy on 30 November for brief discussions with bureau chief on continued FBIS commo support for the [] cooperation agreement.

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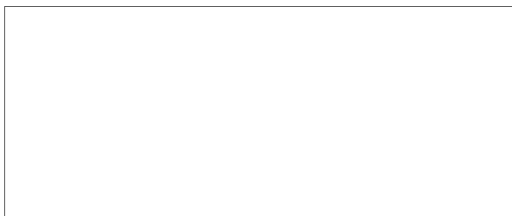
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From the bureau: Engineer [] and Communications supervisor
[] to Madley for biannual Internet meeting.

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Attachments

cc: Chief, Austria Bureau
Chief, Islamabad Unit
Chief, Okinawa Bureau